

**BANKERS HILL COMMUNITY GROUP
MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, October 16, 2023
At BH Clubhouse

Meeting began at 6:30 pm; Pete Politzer welcomed the approximately 49 people in attendance.

Announcements

Pete announced: Next meeting's speakers are Bob Lehman, of the Museum Council of San Diego and Vic Salazar with a Maple Canyon update; no mtg will be held in December; modest bylaw changes were recently adopted by the board, eliminating the unnecessary VP of logistics role; all were urged to visit the updated BHCG web site.

Neighborhood Advocacy – Ann Kilrain announced upcoming Pick and Stroll (Nov 4th) and last Mingle of the year (Nov 14th) at Jimmy Carter's Mexican Cantina. Community Garden volunteers are urgently needed for light cleanup; a brief overview is offered most Wednesday mornings between 9 and 11 am.

Featured Business – Helena Aguirre, owner of Liv Ro Salon and Bankers Hill resident opened her salon 6 months ago on Laurel and 3rd, offering individualized salon services. A cosmetics event is planned for October 26th 3-7pm. For \$25 (which may be applied to purchases) participants will receive a facial makeover. Appointment is required. Helena has also started a monthly meeting for fellow BH business owners to network.

Public Comments

- District 3 City Council candidate Kate Callen introduced herself.
- City Attorney candidate and Deputy City Attorney for the past 10 years, Heather Furberg introduced herself.
- MaryLu Gultekin shared photos and info on the BHCG Community Garden, reiterating request for volunteers to help with simple garden tasks.
- District 3 City Council candidate Coleen Cusack introduced herself.

Government Representatives - None in attendance.

Emily Bonner (District 3 Councilman Whitburn's office) sent regrets and an update that the Councilman recently visited the Naval hospital's safe camping site for homeless individuals.

Featured Speakers

Gerrie Trussel, Executive Director Uptown Community Parking District provided an update on the Bankers Hill Neighborhood Parking Committee, introducing BH representative Peter Raymond. She reported that planters from Elm to Thorn Streets are being reviewed, native plants will replace the initial plantings by SANDAG. Parking Meter rules will be changing over the next 3 months, as a result of business and resident feedback about BH parking constraints: Rules for the east to west facing side streets from Elm to Thorn will be a maximum of 4 hours instead of 2 hours with rates reduced to \$1/hour. Installation of flashing crosswalks on 6th and Nutmeg, 4th and Palm, 5th and Palm will also be completed in the next few months.

Lisa Halverstadt, Senior Investigative Reporter for Voice of San Diego shared insights from her 11 years covering San Diego's homelessness, behavioral health and housing crises. [Presentation may be accessed here.](#)

Lisa characterized the current situation as a basic math problem: more people become homeless than there are available shelter and services. Lisa shared several things the city, county and state are doing or have planned and the number of people expected to benefit. She shared early stats on the camping ban, though true impact is unknown, it appears people are moving themselves and not necessarily going to shelters. Her presentation included updates on Care Court, SB43 and the Governor's plans for a \$6.4 billion bond measure to fund substance use treatment programs, among other things. She closed her presentation discussing common myths about homelessness and addressing questions from the audience:

When people wonder what they can do to help, Lisa's advice is to acknowledge the humanity of those without homes, e.g. smile if you make eye contact (if appropriate).

What are the trends for homeless veterans – Lisa believes there has been significant progress, with more supportive options available due to a focus on Vets. Increasing homelessness is being seen in all populations currently, including among vets.

How is the Monarch School impacting homelessness – Lisa hears positive feedback but cannot speak to the details.

Are there shelters that accept those that are both disabled and homeless? O lot is not accessible, 20th and B is open but is in a flood zone. Those unable to perform activities of daily living are not accepted in shelters.

What is the status of cash subsidy programs? These were hoped to keep people from falling into homelessness, data from prevention programs suggest that they are successful, but they are not scaled to meet the demand. She believes more prevention efforts are needed.

What types of resources will be funded from the bond measure, who is helping? – The bond measure is focused on infrastructure rather than on people to staff these facilities, a state wide challenge for Behavioral Health Providers.

Why have homeless children been lost in the shuffle? Why isn't public informed about the problems of homeless children? Lisa is currently looking into this, thus far she can't explain why.

Why are hospitals allowed to discharge people unable to care for themselves? State law SB 1152 required hospitals to document and connect homeless clients with transportation and shelter. It created documentation requirements but did not avail new resources nor mandate access to shelters. Discharged patients, often with chronic conditions, have no place to go after being discharged and there are no mechanisms to "jump the line" for a shelter bed.

What are the root causes contributing to increasing homelessness? Research indicates that in other communities with people in similar circumstances remain housed. The high cost of living, causes people to fall into homelessness more quickly; once homeless it is extremely hard to get off the street and all issues are exacerbated.

Meeting concluded at 7:55 pm.